

13 FAM 220

LANGUAGE-DESIGNATED POSITIONS (LDPS)

(CT:TPD-17; 09-12-2013)
(Office of Origin: FSI)

13 FAM 221 ESTABLISHING LDPS

13 FAM 221.1 RESPONSIBLE OFFICES

(CT:TPD-12; 04-19-2012)
(Uniform State/BBG/Commerce/USAID)
(Applies to Foreign Service Employees)

The following offices are responsible, in consultation with the chiefs of mission, for designating those Foreign Service positions that require foreign language proficiency and specifying the level of proficiency required:

State	The Director General of the Foreign Service and Director of Human Resources, Bureau of Human Resources (HR)
USAID	The Deputy Assistant Administrator for Human Resources (DAA/M/HR)
BBG	Director of Personnel, OHR
Commerce	The Assistant Secretary and Director General, U.S. and Foreign Commercial Service, International Trade Administration

NOTE: The remainder of this section does not apply to USAID. See USAID ADS 458.

13 FAM 221.2 CRITERIA FOR ESTABLISHING LDPS

(CT:TPD-17; 09-12-2013)
(Uniform State/BBG/Commerce/USAID)
(Applies to Foreign Service Employees)

- a. Operational need is the determining criterion for LDPs, where language proficiency is essential, rather than merely helpful or convenient, to enhancing U.S. effectiveness abroad.
- b. In designating LDPs, the responsible offices should consider the following

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criteria:

- (1) The necessity of using the language to execute successfully the requirements of the position:
 - (a) The frequency of daily use of the language; and
 - (b) The fluency level of that engagement
- (2) Official designation of the language as the national language(s);
- (3) Importance host-nation interlocutors attach to our speaking their language;
- (4) The prevalence of another language spoken by a significant segment of the population;
- (5) General level of English language penetration;
- (6) English language capabilities of the Embassy's Locally Employed Staff in the relevant section;
- (7) Professionalism and availability of interpretation/translation services;
- (8) Prevalence of corruption and the need for language proficiency to ensure necessary oversight;
- (9) Importance of being able to speak certain language(s) in public or at representational events;
- (10) Availability of media in the language(s); importance of monitoring social media in the local language;
- (11) Level of literacy in country:
 - The prevalence of documents published in the language
- (12) Whether speaking and/or reading the language would notably increase the efficiency and scope of the employee's tasks/work portfolio;
- (13) The variety of interactions required for the job (speeches, formal demarches, receptions, visa interviews, travel and engagement with population in rural communities, key segments of society, or minority groups);
- (14) The importance of building a cadre of speakers of the language within the Foreign Service:
 - Does the Department need to develop employees for future assignment at higher levels of responsibility with these language skills?
- (15) The necessity for employees who occupy positions in sections (for example, security or management) where the need for foreign language skills is so innate to the job (e.g., the work involves regular contact with foreign nationals in the local native language) that the post needs at least one or more LDP per section.

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- c. To facilitate accurate proficiency level determinations, posts should review the Proficiency Level Definition descriptions on FSI's website (<http://fsi.state.gov/fsi/sls/ltu/default.asp?id=164>). Asymmetric LDPs may be appropriate in certain instances.

13 FAM 221.3 TESTED LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY RELATED TO LDPS

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(Uniform State/BBG/Commerce/USAID)
(Applies to Foreign Service Employees)

Prior to assuming duties at post, an employee assigned to a language-designated position must possess the required tested level of language proficiency designated for the position. Exceptions to this requirement must be justified by memorandum explaining the exceptional circumstances necessitating a waiver of training for approval by the following responsible officers:

State	The Director, Office of Foreign Service Career Development and Assignments (HR/CDA)
BBG	Director of Personnel, OHR
Commerce	The Assistant Secretary and Director General, U.S. and Foreign Commercial Service, International Trade Administration

13 FAM 221.4 LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY WAIVERS

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(Uniform State/BBG/Commerce/USAID)
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Within the Department of State, language proficiency waivers will normally be requested by the appropriate bureau, through the appropriate HR Assignment Officer (AO). In cases where a waiver is needed for compassionate or personal reasons related to the employee, the Career Development Officer (CDO) may request the waiver on behalf of the employee, clearing with the appropriate HR AO. In either case, it is ultimately the employee's responsibility to ensure that any necessary language waiver is in place before traveling to post.

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